

REMARKS

Claims 1-55 are pending. Claims 1-55 are rejected. No new matter has been added.

35 U.S.C. 102(b) Rejections

Claims 1-55 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Agestam et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,512,885.

The Examiner is respectfully directed to independent Claim 1, which recites that an embodiment of the present invention is directed to:

A method of creating a desired group of a flexible group structure for a network, comprising:

- a) defining one or more private groups, each private group configured for use by one or more first corresponding owners, each private group being unavailable to use by one or more non-owners;
- b) defining one or more public groups, wherein each public group is defined by reference to at least one of said private groups, and wherein each public group is configured for use by one or more second corresponding owners and said one or more non-owners;
- c) selecting one or more particular groups from a set of said one or more private groups and said one or more public groups;
- d) for each selected particular group, indicating whether said selected particular group is to be included in or excluded from said desired group;
- e) associating each of said selected particular groups, with reference to inclusion or exclusion, so as to functionally define said desired group of said flexible group structure; and
- f) managing network security for said network by using said desired group.

Claims 8, 15, 24, 33, 39, 45, and 54 recite similar limitations. Claims 2-7 are dependent upon Claim 1, and recite further features of the claimed invention. Claims 9-14 are dependent upon Claim 8, and recite further features of the claimed invention. Claims 16-

23 are dependent upon Claim 15, and recite further features of the claimed invention. Claims 25-32 are dependent upon Claim 24, and recite further features of the claimed invention. Claims 34-38 are dependent upon Claim 33, and recite further features of the claimed invention. Claims 40-44 are dependent upon Claim 39, and recite further features of the claimed invention. Claims 46-53 are dependent upon Claim 45, and recite further features of the claimed invention. Claim 55 is dependent upon Claim 54, and recites further features of the claimed invention.

The rejection suggests that Agestam suggests each limitation of the embodiment of the present invention recited in Claim 1. Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Agestam fails to describe a method of creating a desired group, where the desired group is created by selecting one or more particular groups from a set of public and private groups and indicating, for each particular group, whether the selected particular group is to be included or excluded from the desired group, as claimed.

Applicant understands Agestam to describe a method to allow different categories of users in a data network to communicate with other categories of users outside of a closed user group, without allowing prohibited contact between members of closed, unrelated user groups (col 1, ln. 66 - col. 2, ln. 5). The method by which Agestam appears to accomplish this end is to define a special type of user group, which includes *members* of multiple user groups, and to associate membership in that special type of user group with a polarity (Fig. 2, col. 2, ln. 65 - col. 3, 34).

The present rejection asserts (pg. 2) that Agestam discloses the selecting of a group indicating whether a particular group is included or excluded from a desired group. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Agestam first depicts several closed user groups (Fig. 1, CUGs 4, 5, 9, and 10), where a closed user group is described as a system in which a member of a certain group can only communicate with other members of that same group (Col.1, ln. 28-35), e.g., member 51, part of CUG 5, can only communicate with other members of CUG 5, i.e., member 52. Agestam allows for individual members to have double group membership (Col. 2, ln. 38-49), such that member 41 has membership in both CUG 4 and CUG 9.

Agestam next describes a system, under which a "special closed user group" (Fig. 2, CUG 1; Col. 2, ln. 65 - Col. 3, ln. 5) can be created. The special closed user group is described as being a system under which traffic within the group is only allowed to flow between *members* of the group having opposite polarity. In the system described by Agestam, and depicted in Figure 2, *individual members* are given membership in this special closed user group (Fig. 2, CUG 1; Col. 3, ln. 2-5). Further, these *individual members* are assigned a polarity, which governs traffic flow within the network.

Unlike the embodiments of the present invention recited in Claim 1, the system of Agestam does not indicate whether a selected particular group is to be included or excluded, as claimed. First, Agestam does not make any such decision; the "polarities" recited in Agestam are not indicative as to whether a particular group should be included

or excluded from the special user group, but rather govern traffic flow within the special user group; any member given a polarity is already in the special user group. Second, even if the polarities were analogous to the including or excluding behavior recited in Claim 1, Agestam does not assign polarities to selected *groups*; Agestam assigns polarities to individual members.

Even if Agestam's groups can be treated analogously to the private and public groups recited in Claim 1, a point Applicant most assuredly does not concede, Agestam still does not teach, suggest, or describe creating a desired group by selecting groups and indicating whether those selected groups should be included or excluded from the desired group, as claimed. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully contends that Agestam fails to anticipate or render obvious the embodiment of the present invention recited in Claims 1, 8, 15, 24, 33, 39, 45, and 54 recite similar limitations.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed embodiment of the invention as set forth in Claims 1, 8, 15, 24, 33, 39, 45, and 54 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Applicants also respectfully submit that Claims 2-7, dependent on Claim 1, Claims 9-14, dependent upon Claim 8, Claims 16-23, dependent upon Claim 15, Claims 25-32, dependent upon Claim 24, Claims 34-38, dependent upon Claim 33, Claims 40-44, dependent upon Claim 39, Claims 46-53, dependent upon Claim 45, and Claim 55, dependent upon Claim 54, overcome the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), as they are dependent on allowable base claims.

Conclusion

In light of the above-listed amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the remaining Claims.

The Examiner is urged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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